

# LEWIS SUSTAINABILITY



Photo by Luis Chavez

## HIGHLIGHTS

ENERGY EFFICIENCY SERIES

PRAIRIE PLOT

PUMPKIN PITCH

NATURE TRAIL

WEIGH THE WASTE

COME CLEAN, GO GREEN

OTHER EVENTS

GET INVOLVED

## INTRODUCTION

Consistent efforts to improve campus and individual sustainability continued this semester. Through our events and programs, we strive to make the greatest impact for both our Lewis community and our partners. We do this by seeking ways to incorporate education around social equity, environmental protection, and economic prosperity. After a year of almost completely virtual events, this semester we were able to have more in-person events again, following proper COVID-19 protocol. The combination of virtual, in-person, and hybrid events allowed for increased engagement.

## FALL ENERGY EFFICIENCY SERIES

Lewis Sustainability partnered with Will County Green, the Citizens Utility Board (CUB), and other higher education institutions to host three workshops related to energy efficiency. The first event was a "What You Can Do" virtual webinar that taught participants about energy regulations and billing, the significance of efficiency, and simple steps one can take to reduce their energy waste. The second event was a DIY Energy Audit Workshop that showed participants how to estimate their energy consumption, while the third event was half-hour personal bill consultations that allowed participants to review their energy bills with a CUB representative. This event showcases how Lewis Sustainability collaborates with partners to engage both the campus and local communities, all while teaching participants how to be more sustainable in their own lives.



## PRAIRIE PLOT



The prairie plot located outside the Arts and Sciences building features many native prairie plants, helping to bring more of the natural landscape of Illinois to campus. To help maintain this prairie plot, a seed collection event was held on October 5th. Participants gathered seeds from the numerous species in separate bags to be planted in the spring. This helps maintain the natural area and keep the plot thriving. This is one way in which Lewis Sustainability helped connect students to nature this semester.





## 🎃 8TH ANNUAL PUMPKIN PITCH 🎃



335  
participants,  
7,300 lbs. of  
pumpkin  
composted

For the 8th year in a row, Lewis Sustainability partnered with Will County Green and the Society of Physics Students to host the Pumpkin Pitch on November 6th. This event was focused on sustainable waste management with opportunities for composting and recycling. The event was open to local community members in addition to the Lewis community and offered opportunities to catapult old pumpkins with a catapult built by the Society of Physics Students. The smashed pumpkins were then taken to be composted. In addition, participants could bring old electronics for recycling and old documents to be shredded for recycling or compost. This event was a success with 335 participants. 7,300 pounds of pumpkin was composted, 13,000 pounds of documents were shredded, and 9,071 pounds of electronics were collected for recycling. There were also educational tables at the event for participants to learn about composting. This event was a successful community engagement event that helped teach participants about how waste can be turned into a resource.



## NATURE TRAIL



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The Burnham Centennial Nature Trail was established in 2008 to offer an area on campus where one can escape into nature. The trail features many native plants and provides habitats for wildlife such as deer, squirrels, and birds. To help maintain the trail, a trail clean-up day was hosted on November 11th. Participants helped remove trash from the trail to help keep the trail nice and clean for all to enjoy.

## WEIGH THE WASTE

Six times throughout the semester, the Sustainability Club hosted Weigh the Waste events in the various dining areas across campus. The events' goal was to teach students how to properly classify waste between landfill, compost, and recycle to ensure they were putting their waste in the correct bin. This teaches better sustainable waste management and helps ensure Lewis is composting and recycling our waste as much as possible.



## COME CLEAN, GO GREEN COMPETITION

All students pay a \$5 sustainability fee each semester that goes toward the Come Clean, Go Green competition. The competition allows students to propose a \$10,000 to \$50,000 project that will improve campus sustainability. Past winning projects include laminar-flow showerheads, a solar shed, and a biodiesel processor. This is open to all majors and we encourage you to participate in this competition to truly help make a difference in campus sustainability. Proposals are due by March 4th and must have a faculty or staff advisor. The winner will be announced during Earth Week.

## OTHER EVENTS

In addition to the events listed above, the Sustainability Council collaborated with the Lewis Innovation Hub to host the event titled, "Focus on the Future with Responsible Innovation," on October 19th. This event centered on tackling big environmental challenges through innovation and entrepreneurial enterprise. It served as a networking opportunity for participants as well as gave them insight into what the campus does to help work towards a more sustainable future.



An upcycling event was also held on December 2nd in which students could turn old containers, such as plastic bottles, into planters for succulents. This showed participants how to give waste a second life and become a resource, rather than just sending it to a landfill where it would become a source of pollution.

## GET INVOLVED

The fall semester provided numerous opportunities for sustainability education. The Lewis community and local communities were both invited to learn about sustainability and how to apply it in their daily lives. Sustainability takes many forms and Lewis University is just one example with our many sustainable features and strides towards change. Events will continue to be held every semester to further education on sustainability. To stay connected, follow us on social media and visit our website at [lewisu.edu/sustainability](http://lewisu.edu/sustainability).



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